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# SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN

*October  
1950*

# Miscellany

**Cover:** Forest, Glacier Bay National Monument. Photograph by Ansel Adams. For some of Sierra Club Director Adams's best photographs of the national parks and monuments see *My Camera in the National Parks* (Houghton Mifflin, \$10), which has just been published. This is not only some of the photographer's finest work, but also the best job yet done in the reproduction of photographs in bookwork. A handsomely designed book, too.

**Mountain troops.** The draft has greatly increased the tempo of inquiries about means of enlisting or transferring into whatever mountain units the armed forces now have or are to have. We have been investigating the matter locally, as well as in New York and in the Pentagon, but still have nothing definite to report.

Our recommendation to skiers and mountaineers is to sign up for your *second* choice when the time comes, and to keep the Editor posted about your wishes and whereabouts after that.

Address 2061 Center St., Berkeley 4.

**Various dates:** All the Park Superintendents of the United States held a conference in Yosemite Valley October 16-21. Richard M.

Leonard, Secretary of the Sierra Club, was present.

The winter meeting of the Sierra Club Board of Directors will be on December 2.

And next year, March 30-31, the Wilderness Conference will be held at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, details to be announced later.

**The Sierra Club exhibit** at the State Fair was conceded to be a success, in spite of the grilling heat. Even more interest was evinced by the public than last year, and all who worked in planning it, placing it, and manning it and gracing it, are to be congratulated for a job well done.

**The American Forestry Association** is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Created in 1875, it is the oldest forest conservation organization in America. It is a national organization for the advancement of intelligent management and use of forests and related resources of soil, water, wildlife and outdoor recreation. Its purpose is to create an enlightened public appreciation of these resources and the part they play in the social and economic life of the nation.

**THE SIERRA CLUB**, founded in 1892, has devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources, particularly those of the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast. Since these resources receive best protection from those who know them well, the club has long conducted educational activities, under the committees listed below, to make them known. Participation is invited in the program to preserve wilderness, wildlife, forests, and streams.

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# Sierra Club Bulletin

VOLUME 35

OCTOBER, 1950

NUMBER 9

...TO EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT THE NATURAL MOUNTAIN SCENE...

## For the October Record

### *Rogue River Basin*

Prospective power development on the Rogue River in Oregon will be held up for some time, as Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman has asked for further investigation of the Rogue River basin, looking toward a "balanced multi-purpose development and conservation of the natural resources."

The Secretary said his department has complete information on irrigation and power aspects of a plan for developing the basin; but it is necessary to have equally detailed information on the scenic, recreation, and fish and wildlife aspects.

The Fish and Wildlife Service said it will take four to five years for the fish study only. Although the Rogue basin is a potentially important irrigation, power and flood control site, it is a very important wilderness and recreation area now.

The specific studies ordered by Secretary Chapman are to be on:

1. Fish in the Rogue and its tributaries through "at least a full fish cycle." This will cover four to five years, the time between the spawning of salmon and steelhead trout and their return as mature fish.

2. Scenic and recreational resources of the region.

3. Basic water and geologic data, and analysis of mineral potentials.

Chapman directed that these investigations be coordinated by the Pacific Northwest Field Committee, composed of regional heads of Interior Department agencies in the Northwest, for a "truly compre-

hensive plan." When a feasible plan is made it will be submitted to the states and federal departments concerned, for comment; then it will be sent to Congress.

### *Jackson Hole*

Continual vigilance, continual optimism, and continual work does pay off sometimes. Those who have kept at the apparently hopeless task of saving Jackson Hole, and who in spite of many moments of despair, have never given up the fight, can now know it was worth it.

The bill (S. 3400) consolidating the Jackson Hole National Monument and Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming into one unit, to be known by the latter name, was signed by the President on September 14, and is now law. This bill, taking into consideration the numerous problems which have beset those who have worked on it, seems a satisfactory solution to the long-standing controversy over the area.

The measure provides for management of the famous Jackson Hole elk herd under regulations to be issued annually by the National Park Service and the Wyoming Fish and Game Commission together. A part of the former Monument lands have been added to the National Elk Refuge near Jackson, Wyoming, a small tract is to be given to the Forest Service, and the remainder, including the some 30,000 acres of Rockefeller lands donated to the government last December, are to be added to the Park.

## Federation Convenes at Norden

Representatives of outdoor clubs from the four western states of Washington, Oregon, California and Utah gathered at Clair Tappaan Lodge at Norden on September 2, 1950, for the nineteenth annual convention of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs.

The Federation, for those who do not know, is just what its name suggests. Its purposes are "to advance the common aims of member clubs and societies, to disseminate information concerning them, to increase the interest of the public in the outdoors, to assist conservation and research endeavors of member clubs." The delegates to the convention are chosen from the member clubs; there is a president, treasurer and secretary, and a vice-president from each state. The *Western Outdoor Quarterly* is the official organ of the Federation. Any individual may become an associate member, and receive the *Quarterly*, by paying the dues of \$1.00 a year.

President Harry James set the tenor of the sessions; companionable good humor for the accomplishment of serious business. The serious business encompassed the problems of the individual clubs; and the presentation of resolutions for combatting dangerous threats to our precious wilderness areas.

After the roll call of the twenty-nine clubs (three clubs admitted during the convention brought the number to thirty-two) the Legislative Committee report was given by the chairman, John R. Barnard, outstanding worker for conservation, and secretary of the Sierra Club Conservation Committee. He told of the work done toward the consolidation of the Jackson Hole National Monument with the Grand Teton National Park, the opposition to the San Jacinto Tramway, and the restricting of airplanes over the Quetico-Superior Wilderness Area.

The second day of the meeting was devoted mainly to reports from the member clubs, and on the final day the resolutions submitted by the Resolutions Committee

were voted upon, and the officers elected for the following year. John Barnard of the Sierra Club, was elected president; Joe Momyer, Sierra Club, California vice-president; Ed Darrow, Contra Costa Hills Club, California deputy vice-president; Glen DeGroff, Trails Club of Oregon, treasurer. Olga Madsen was re-elected secretary, and Rosella McCune will continue as editor of the *Western Outdoor Quarterly*.

Guests at the convention included Miss Harlean James, Executive Secretary of the American Planning and Civic Association; Frank Kittredge, Chief Engineer of the National Park Service; P. A. Thompson, Regional Forester for the California Region of the U. S. Forest Service; and Newton B. Drury, Director of the National Park Service.

The resolutions passed by the delegates were wide in scope, and are in brief as follows:

### *Dams in National Parks, Monuments*

The resolution was passed to urge the Congress and the President of the United States to reaffirm strongly the national policy that our national parks, national monuments and formally dedicated wilderness areas shall be reserved for their primary purposes as set forth, so that they may be passed on "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

### *Jackson Hole National Monument*

Resolution passed to work actively to secure the consolidation of Jackson Hole National Monument and Grand Teton National Park, and to that end urge the President of the U. S. to sign the legislation pending before him.

### *San Jacinto Tramway*

Resolution passed that the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs restate its previous opposition to the proposal for a right of way over federal lands to permit construction of an aerial tramway to the summit area of Mount San Jacinto, . . . and

that it so advise the Secretary of the Interior at once. Also that the Federation urge its member clubs and associate members to take like action.

#### *Conservation Education*

Resolution passed that the Federation go on record as favoring development of teacher training programs to promote conservation education and further that the Federation commend and lend assistance to those states which are developing conservation education programs.

#### *Oregon Department of Resources*

This resolution urged that in the establishment of any State Department of Natural Resources in Oregon, provision be made for recognizing as a natural resource the recreational value of land.

#### *Roadside Parks*

In the belief that scenic roadside picnic spots and small parks do much to increase public participation in and enjoyment of the outdoors and assist in keeping the roadsides clean and attractive, the resolution was passed to urge member clubs and associate members to initiate and assist in programs in their particular states for the creation and maintenance of such roadside parks.

#### *Wild Areas in Oregon Cascades*

Due to some changes which the Oregon delegates felt should be made in boundaries in the Three Sisters Primitive Area to eliminate some parts which are not truly wilderness in character and to add some lands which are wilderness and should be included in the area, it was resolved to request the U. S. Forest Service to (1) establish Wild Areas in the vicinity of Diamond Peak, Waldo Lake and Mount Washington (2) modify the boundaries of the Three Sisters Primitive Area so that the revised area more truly represents the wilderness country (3) withdraw the Limited Area designation of the Summit Lake Limited Area without reserving any of that land as a Wild Area.

Because there is a demand for overnight camping facilities along the main highways of Oregon and very few Oregon State Parks have such provisions, it was resolved that the Oregon State Highway Commission be urged to make provision for overnight camping in the State Parks of Oregon which are suitable for that purpose, especially those easily reached from main highways.

#### *California Condors*

This was a resolution to urge the Bureau of Land Management of the Department of the Interior to safeguard the Condor Sanctuary in Los Padres National Forest by refusing any permits for oil exploration or development which would disturb the nesting places in the sanctuary.

#### *Organization Campsites in Parks*

Because of a great increase in the use of our national parks by both adult and youth organizations it was felt that there is a need for the establishment of more organization campsites in the national parks, and a resolution was passed to urge the National Park Service to set aside more such organization campsites in areas convenient for hiking and climbing.

The success of this three-day gathering was well assured when Cyrus Washburn agreed to take on the duties of chairman. He and his committee did an excellent job, with Jack Dearth as program chairman, Tillie Smedberg and Sidney Bymel handling the reservations, and Emerson LeClercq assistant at large. Also responsible for the success were Henry Cam, Bob Ruedy, the Lodge Committee, and all the girls who served so well.

The 1950 convention of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs is now past history. The problems discussed and resolutions adopted are for future history; history that the Federation hopes will bring the realization of the conservationists' ideals of the preservation of the wilderness areas for future generations. The Federation has accomplished its mission for the year. The results are up to you.

—HELEN RUDY



## The Membership Committee at Work

Between his own election and the time when he wishes to sponsor another applicant the Sierra Club member usually gives little thought to the activities of the Membership Committee of the club and the chapter membership committees. Yet these committees are active the year round, and play an important part in club affairs.

Once a month the head office sends to the chapters a list of all applicants and their sponsors. There is a Membership Committee in each chapter which has sixty days to approve, disapprove, or recommend further study to the Membership Committee of the Sierra Club. This consists of the six chairmen of the chapter membership committees, two members chosen from the club at large, and a chairman appointed by the president of the club. Approval by the chapter committees, if no outside protest has been made, is final, and it is only in the extremely rare case of disapproval that the whole club Membership Committee is called upon to discuss and vote on the application in question. The chapter committees are therefore concerned with the major amount of details of election, while the Club Committee acts mainly as a board of review, or in matters of the general policy of election.

These membership committees have their problems, which they would like to share with the rest of the club members. The Sierra Club is a corporation devoted to the public interest; hence it is tax-free, and must carefully preserve that status, which implies that membership is open to all who wish to support us. On the other hand the club carries on its activities, work as well as play, in groups where highly objectionable personalities may hinder the work and repel prospective members. Membership committees must steer a careful course through these extremes.

With the increase in size of the chapters these committees also face the difficulty of knowing the people they approve. The

experience of the San Francisco Bay Chapter will illustrate this. When the new chapter Membership Committee of 1947 held its first meeting, only two of the list of thirty applicants were known to anyone on the committee, which had been carefully chosen to represent all chapter activities. No committee wishes to be merely a rubber stamp, and since the By-Laws specifically charge the membership committees to investigate applicants, they naturally turned to the only other source of information—the sponsors. Printed letters are now sent to all sponsors asking them to tell us about the applicants.

The committee was relieved to find that the general membership accepted the new idea quite calmly. Sponsors apparently welcome a chance to tell us about the good material they are bringing into the club. The letters also give a most important picture of the extraordinary variety of skills and interests which is coming into the club. An index of these special skills is being developed for use in the search for new talent and leadership. Applicants themselves are too modest to mention these important items in their own letters. All the larger chapters, where personal contact is difficult, now use these letters to sponsors.

There are other functions of the membership committees. Education of the applicant is one of them. Do we need educating? How many new members think of the club as That Ski Club, or That Hiking Club? The educational committees of the club carry conservation information to both members and the public but the membership committees feel that the applicant should know the broad base and high ideals of the club he is joining. Most chapters now make an effort to provide some gathering at which applicants can become acquainted with the club as a whole, and the general Membership Committee of the whole club most earnestly appeals to sponsors to do all they can towards encouraging the applicants to find out more about the Sierra Club, that they

may better enjoy the club and help forward its work in conservation.

Enthusiastic members are our best recruiting agencies. The Sierra Club needs and welcomes new members, and the best way to a healthy increase in our numbers is for each member to advertise the club

he so much enjoys. Try to bring in at least one new member a year, and help the Sierra Club to make its weight count in the fight to preserve our finest public lands from destruction.

CICELY M. CHRISTY, Chairman  
Sierra Club Membership Committee

## Silt and the Dam Builders

We are thinking and hearing a good deal about dams nowadays. And we will continue to hear about them as long as droughts and floods continue. The *Outdoor News Bulletin* of the Wildlife Management Institute succeeds in crowding a good deal of interesting information and potent remarks into its bi-weekly mimeographed pages, and earlier in the year it talked about one aspect of dams—that of silt. We have heard that silt is no longer the problem it was supposed to be. Nevertheless, this article plowed into the Army Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation and left them only silt to stand on; we consider it worth quoting.

### *"Nemesis of the Dam Builders*

"The Army Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, in their high-dam-building programs, appear sometimes to win more clear-cut victories on the floors of Congress than most armies ever won on the field of battle. No project is too big for the Engineers to tackle; and few politicians dare speak against them. Yet, they have one enemy which they have been unable to defeat and which must eventually lead to drastic modification of future river programs, the Wildlife Management Institute believes. In spite of their political efficiency and mechanical genius, despite their recognized ability to move mountains and change the courses of rivers, the Engineers have not been able to conquer silt.

"Silt is more than mud. It is the displaced, rich top soil of thousands of American farms, grazing lands, and watersheds. Yesterday, the top soil equivalent to that

on 200 forty-acre farms flowed into rivers: today the same amount will be lost from the land forever. It will cover spawning grounds of fishes, clog reservoirs behind multimillion dollar dams, and raise river beds between costly levees. Since the Engineers do not know how to attack it, they try to ignore it or to use it for obtaining higher appropriations. When a reservoir fills, a new dam must be built; when navigation channels clog, they must be dredged; when floods occur, caused by the same mismanagement of the soil that causes siltation, levees must be built higher. Except for this, all the Engineers can do is dredge and straighten river channels and rush the silt load out to sea as quickly as possible.

"Such a program has foreseeable limitations. Levees and dams can be built only so high. There are limits both to the number of suitable damsites and to the taxpayers' burden. Eventually, the public will realize what the Engineers seldom admit publicly—that the real management of rivers begins in the headwaters and on the hilltops, that silt can be defeated only by keeping it in the form of soil through good land management. The present alarming rate of siltation of reservoirs calls for a prompt reappraisal of our river development program; for forcing closer cooperation between the Engineers and the Soil Conservation and Forest Services—both of which are more than willing to meet the Engineers halfway; or for placing the civil functions of the Army Engineers under a department which sees conservation as more than a river segmented by dams and constricted by levees."

## Snowdonia in Danger

They are having their troubles with development schemes in Great Britain too. The British Mountaineering Council with other interested associations are working on opposition to various hydro-electric schemes which would ruin the mountains of Snowdonia in Wales. There are three main projects, entailing the damming and flooding of valleys, the building of reservoirs, pipelines, tunnels, roads, powerhouses and all the necessary adjuncts.

If you could read the pamphlets published to warn people of the plans, you would think you were reading any of our own conservation outputs. "The hydro-electric engineer is attracted to North Wales merely on account of its elevation and rainfall. To him it is a happy accident that it is mountainous. . . . when all is done, and the taxpayers' money is sunk in the ruin of our first National Park, I am told that the annual amount of electricity resulting will hardly exceed what could be produced by a quarter of a million tons of coal. I am told also there are half a dozen ways in which the same results could be achieved. These mountains were a fortuitous choice because it seemed so obvious to the engineering mind that where there were so many waterfalls unemployed something ought to be done about it." "Dams, however well designed, are artificial structures out of place in a naturally wild landscape." "Each power house will need a road to it strong enough to carry the heavy weights of machinery. Also where tunneling is to be done, similar roads will be needed up to the mouths of the tunnels in the very heart of the hills."

Have you heard enough? We are all in the same predicament, only Britain is

even worse off than we are, because the area is so much smaller and although there is much lovely countryside, there are fewer parks and all wild land is precious. We hope the fight to preserve the North Wales mountains will be successful.

## Repairs in the Parks

What can be done about the state of repair of the national parks? Their popularity increases every year, but the disappointment of the visitors also increases. Not because the parks themselves are not as beautiful and as worthwhile as always, but because there is not enough money to keep them in repair. According to a recent report from the House Public Land Committee, the only way to remedy the situation is to spend more money to put them in shape and to keep them so.

It is no pleasure to travel to one of the nation's parks and find the congestion so great and the facilities so inadequate that all the beauty is lost. Since the war the travel has increased so much that it has been impossible to meet the situation properly. "The problem is not one of concessions alone . . ." says the report, "Camp grounds poorly equipped and crowded far beyond the capacities for which they were planned; road systems in need of thorough overhauling; utilities which were more than adequate for present demands—these are some of the conditions which visitors have noted. . . ."

This is in line with all the reports that have been coming in for the past year or two from state parks as well as national parks and national forests. All the parks throughout the country are suffering from popularity and poverty. Money and more parks are needed. Yet there are still people who say there are too many parks already.



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